



ASLEF

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Wales on Rails – special report on the state of the nation



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EDWINA HART: Benefits generated by the railway
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Mick addresses the Big Meeting in July

Driven by change

OUR industry is going through major change, much of it driven not by the needs of the travelling public, the taxpayer, or the thousands who rely on the railways for work, but by politics and the protection of a flawed, and failed, system by the government.

Our bid to legally question the rushed franchising of the East Coast has been refused by the courts and we are considering legal advice on how we might proceed. Existing franchises are being extended by direct award, without any form of tendering or competition, and there is a frightening trend of companies no longer being invited to bid to run and develop a service but to cut jobs and services, as proposed by the Northern invitation to tender. The imposition of driver only operation as a norm is not about improvement but cutting wage bills as a way of increasing profits in an industry that saw £707 million paid out in dividends last year.

Rail policy has, recently, been at the forefront of political debate (as we have always argued it should be). We are engaging when and where we can to influence that debate in the run-up to the general election.

This is the time of year when the Durham Miners' Gala and the Tolpuddle festival, two of the biggest events on the trade union calendar, take place and anyone who doubts the relevance of trade unions should attend; they would be converted immediately. 100,000 went to the Big Meeting and I had the privilege of speaking on behalf of ASLEF. But all the speakers talked about the future of our communities, education, housing, rail, the NHS, properly paid jobs, the Royal Mail, food banks, and the perverse legislation that denies us justice.

To all who voted in the political fund, thank you. The District 7 executive committee election will be a run-off between Andy Hudd and Bryan Davies and we wish both well. The new TSGN franchise starts soon; the lead officer will be Graham Morris with Dick Fisher taking on responsibility for Eurostar.

Mick Whelan, general secretary



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ABOUT **ASLEF**

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Marching for miners and a socialist future

A SLEF's general secretary Mick Whelan got a rapturous reception at the 130th Durham Miners' Gala when he called on a future Labour government to bring Britain's railways back into public ownership. The move, which opinion polls show would be popular even with Conservative voters, fed up with being 'ripped off' over soaring season ticket prices, should be at the heart of a plan to rebalance the British economy for the 21st century.

Mick turned his fire on David Cameron's Conservative-led coalition – 'Under the guise of austerity this government is dividing communities' – and urged working people to show solidarity with each other in the struggle against the free marketeers' neo-liberal agenda which has palpably failed the people of Britain. 'All trade unions,' he said, 'should be standing shoulder to shoulder. Can they sack us all? I don't know. But let us see them try!' That sentiment was echoed by Paul Kenny of the GMB: 'Unions will only die if they stop fighting for what they believe.'

More than 100,000 people lined the streets of the old cathedral city to see trade union



activists march behind banners, brass bands and bagpipes to mark the 30th anniversary of the bitter miners' strike of 1984-85. Spectators packed the racecourse to hear Mick and Paul and other speakers including Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover, Christine Blower of the National Union of Teachers and Steve Gillan of the Prison Officers' Association.

Davy Hopper, general secretary of the Durham Miners' Association, said it was the biggest turnout for the Big Meeting since the miners' strike and police praised organisers for creating a carnival atmosphere.



Mick Whelan (top left) between Durham Miners' leader Davy Hopper and Kevin Maguire of the *Daily Mirror* watches from the balcony of the County Hotel as tens of thousands of men and women (top right) march through Durham for the Big Meeting. Kevin Lindsay led an ASLEF delegation from Scotland (above left) while Gateshead & Newcastle branch (above) brought their smart new banner



Tom Corbin, train driver, ASLEF activist, and Labour councillor, launched his campaign to become Member of Parliament for Salisbury, where he has lived and worked for 35 years, at the Red Lion Hotel in Sarum. The event was well attended and the upbeat atmosphere boosted by a witty speech by ASLEF's national organiser Simon Weller. Clare Moody, Labour MEP for the South West and Gibraltar, also spoke.

'The hard work now begins, but Tom has a legion of ASLEF and local Labour Party activists keen to do their bit for the campaign,' said Annie Rutter, who took over from Tom as Salisbury branch secretary two years ago. 'Our thanks for all the donations and good wishes that Tom has received from ASLEF branches around the country. We'll keep you all updated on his progress as the campaign gathers pace.'

GREEN LIGHT FOR SUPER TERMINAL

Expansion of the Daventry international rail freight terminal will get more trucks – which cause congestion, accidents and fatalities – off Britain's roads and create more green jobs, according to Freight on Rail. The project will provide 8 million sq ft of distribution space with good rail and road connections at the heart of the UK's distribution network; capacity for 32 freight trains in and out of the centre each day; the ability to handle 500,000 containers each year; and new green jobs for 9,000 people. 'The strategic rail freight interchange at Daventry demonstrates how rail and road complement each other and how SRFIs facilitate cost-effective and efficient transfer between modes,' said Philippa Edmunds, FoR manager. 'A network of SRFIs across the UK is an essential part of getting freight onto rail to reduce road fatalities, road congestion and pollution.'



ASLEF left a floral tribute in memory of comrades who died fighting for the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. The ASLEF contingent at the annual Memorial Trust commemoration on the South Bank in London included Mick Whelan, Graham Morris, Dicky Fisher, Finn Brennan, Marz Colombini and Steve Richardson. (Photo: Shaun Seymour).

CONFERENCES

The International Transport Workers' Federation congress is in Sofia, Bulgaria, from Sunday 10 to Saturday 16 August. The Burston strike school rally is at Burston, near Diss, in Norfolk on Sunday 7 September. The Trades Union Congress is at the BT convention centre, King's Dock, Liverpool, from Sunday 7 to Wednesday 10 September. The Labour Party conference, the last before next year's general election, is at the Manchester Central exhibition centre from Sunday 21 to Wednesday 24 September.

RUN-OFF TO REPLACE BRIAN

There will be a run-off to elect the new executive committee member for District 7 after the resignation of Brian Corbett when he was elected as the new District Organiser, as no candidate secured more than half of the valid vote. Andy Hudd got 423 votes; Bryan Davies 367; Ian Thompson 42; and Collette Gibson 35. Turnout was 42.6%.

Rail pledge could swing election for Labour

A promise to bring Britain's railways back into public ownership could help swing the general election in May next year for Labour. Because a majority of voters in key Conservative-held battleground seats – Crawley, Stevenage, Reading West and Milton Keynes South – want the railways renationalised, according to new research by Survation. 74% of those who expressed a preference in the four key marginals believe the railways would be no worse under a new



Passengers say privatisation has failed and the model is flawed

model of public ownership, half thought fares would be cheaper while 71% thought prices would be either the same or cheaper.

60% now want their local train operating company to be brought back into public ownership at the next opportunity; split by party as 71% Labour, 62% Liberal Democrat and 47% Conservatives. And one in three of those who believe their operator should remain in private hands don't believe the entire network should be in private ownership.

Truck on, tyke

New research has revealed that the lorries using Britain's roads are being subsidised to the tune of £5 billion each year. The research, carried out for the Campaign for Better Transport, found that HGVs pay less than 40% of the costs associated with their activities with the taxpayer picking up the rest of the bill. Trucks do not pay for the congestion they cause, or the costs of investing in road infrastructure, and the negative impact they have on public

health and the natural environment.

Philippa Edmunds, of Freight on Rail, said: 'This shows the scale of the subsidy HGVs get. In practice that means a huge backlog of pot holes, disappointing progress on lorry

road safety and congestion problems at busy times. That one in three HGVs are driving round completely empty exemplifies why government must urgently update the way it deals with freight.'

Cows on the line

Three cows were killed when they were hit by a train in Northumberland in June. The animals got through a fence and onto the train track at Bothal viaduct near Morpeth where they were struck by a train travelling from Edinburgh to King's Cross. Turn to pages 10+11 for our special report on the lessons learned from the Polmont rail disaster in 1984.

District 3 is holding its annual safety seminar for the north west and north Wales at the Thistle Atlantic Tower in Liverpool on Wednesday 10 September. It offers bespoke training so reps can deal with safety issues in a diligent and professional manner. There are guest speakers in the morning and workshops, sharing best practice, in the afternoon. For further information, contact Colin Smith, District 3 Organiser, on 07977 142460 (csmith@aslef.org.uk) or Alan Moss, safety rep, on 07917 063665 (alanmossaslef@aol.com).

Off the rails

The Daily Telegraph **THE DAILY TELEGRAPH**, like *The Sun* and *Daily*



Mail and other papers of a right-wing bent, is usually quick to heap scorn on the notion of 'elf'n'safety. Pleasing, then, if curious, to come across this think piece by assistant editor and chief leader writer Philip Johnston: 'Health and safety has become

synonymous with nanny statism, interfering jobsworths, ludicrous litigation and risk aversion, yet the Health and Safety at Work Act, which is 40 years old this summer, has arguably saved more lives than any other piece of legislation, including the ban on drink driving or the compulsory wearing of seat belts in cars. It may well have reduced deaths by 5,000 or more. So how did an Act that was by any measure a milestone in social reform turn into one of the most disparaged statutes of recent times? Partly it has to do with the way the law is interpreted – and often wrongly blamed for absurd restrictions imposed on perfectly innocuous practices. But it also reflects an absolutist view that it is possible to avoid accidental injury or death, rather than simply to reduce the circumstances in which they might occur. Forty years on, the Act has achieved what it set out to do, which is to insist upon high standards of health and safety in places of work. All we need do now is to apply the law with the common sense that inspired it in the first place.'



TEMPERATURES are soaring but Southeastern is telling parched punters not to drink water from toilet bowls on their trains this summer. The company became the butt of online jokes after Tom Papworth spotted this sticker on the back of a toilet seat while travelling from Victoria to

Orpington in Kent. It helpfully warns commuters who might be tempted to drink straight from the can: 'Not drinking water.' The company refuses to say how many thirsty passengers have mistaken one of its train toilets for a cool, refreshing water fountain but a spokeswoman said: 'It never harms to state the obvious.' And adds: 'We're reviewing the location and number of signs on our trains at the moment and will feed this example into the process.' Bet they will...



MATTHEW PARRIS had a bit of fun at our expense in his *My Week* column in *The Times*. 'I've been amusing myself studying the online campaign by Andy Botham, of ASLEF, to be adopted as Labour's prospective Parliamentary candidate for my home constituency of Derbyshire Dales.' Indeed he has. But it would have been better if the telly pundit, who was Conservative MP for West Derbyshire from 1979 to 1986, hadn't then referred in his column to Rob Smith, who is seeking the nomination in Shrewsbury, then 'Mike Whelan' and 'Bob Whelan'. It's Mick Whelan, Rob Smith, and Bob Crow, Matt...

500 CLUB: York branch, with number 187, won the July draw, scooping the RMS prize money jackpot of £360.

Health and efficiency

STEVE BUTLER, of King's Cross branch, reports on a day designed to ensure that everyone goes home safely at the end of every shift

ELEVEN health and safety reps from District 5 attended a safety training day run by District Organiser Nigel Gibson on 2 July. There were presentations from Abellio Greater Anglia human resources and safety assurances director Michelle Smart and Don Wilson, principal inspector of railways at the Office of Rail Regulation. Both speakers gave us a valuable insight into the latest developments and areas of focus in their relevant domains.

We had the opportunity throughout the day of discussing issues while improving our skills by taking part in a body mapping exercise led by ASLEF safety advisers Mick Holder and Dave Bennett. Body mapping is a valuable tool for reps to use to

steer ORR guidance on health risk management away from government wellbeing guidelines to occupational health issues. This may sound like gobbledegook but it means that TOCs and FOCs cannot dodge their H&S management responsibilities by attributing operational incidents and accidents to a driver because he or she is overweight, doesn't exercise or get enough sleep. The industry aims to save £79 million each year through better health management, efficiencies which would decrease absenteeism and presenteeism (light duties).

Safety legislation has, at times, particularly during privatisation, been the key in holding the railway together. We operate in turbulent times where the brooms of efficiency continue to sweep fiercely through our fragmented working environments by the lucky operators of the day! The government has attacked safety in the workplace with cutbacks totalling 35% to bodies such as the Health & Safety Executive so they can no longer campaign, and are being reduced to a pay as you go service, with the ORR not too far behind.

There will be less guidance, fewer inspections, improvement and prohibition notices or prosecutions when these bodies are starved of resources. Firms, it is feared, will literally get away with corporate murder.

McNulty described Driver Only



Operation as 'a safe method of operation' and said 'the default position for all services on the GB rail network should be DDO'. This is in stark contrast to the very real casualties at platform/train interfaces and the prosecution and liability factors that burden drivers on DDO routes where stations are inadequately staffed. There is no room for trade unions in McNulty's Rail Delivery Group which is primarily designed to engineer ways, behind closed doors, to cut costs on our railway.

'Cost being grossly disproportionate to risk' and 'reasonably practicable' are phrases we are all too familiar with in health and safety. Future generations of drivers are dependent on us to protect what



H&S reps listen attentively (top) before posing for the traditional team photo (above) at the end of the day

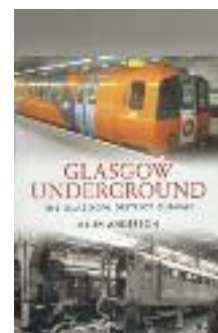
our predecessors handed over to us. The only thing grossly disproportionate should be our enthusiasm to not only defend but to improve our working environments. Training sessions such as these are key to equipping safety reps with the skills necessary to make a difference in the workplace.

Clockwork orange

ROSS PATTON goes underground in Glasgie

Rail enthusiast and proud Glaswegian Keith Anderson pays homage to the city of Glasgow and its small, yet well-known, district subway in this short but intriguing read. *Glasgow Underground: The Glasgow District Subway* (Amberley Books, £14.99) is described by the author as a book that

will encourage you to visit the city and travel on the subway. From his early days training as an industrial engineer to becoming an author of Glaswegian history, his enthusiasm for the ingenuity of Victorian engineering is shown in a fashion which will help raise the profile of the world's third oldest underground



railway.

He manages to squeeze more than 120 years into 100 pages. Accompanied by a series of pictures and maps dating from the 1800s he does well to add a bit of colour to the book and, at the same time, gives us a guide to each station that makes up the line. If you love Glasgow and its transport system and want to learn a little more about what is affectionately known as the Clockwork Orange then this is your book!

Festival offers hope not hate

ASLEF is the first trade union to back Doncaster 4 All, a multicultural festival in the town timed to coincide, on Saturday 27 September, with the UK Independence Party's annual conference.

UKIP, once described by David Cameron as consisting of 'fruitcakes, loonies and closet racists,' is boasting that its bash at Doncaster racecourse 'will be our biggest ever party conference.' Nigel Farage, described by *The Economist* as 'a saloon bar bore,' says: 'UKIP goes from strength to strength in South Yorkshire, the venue borders Ed Miliband's constituency, and this event will represent our firing of the starting pistol for the long general election campaign. We are expecting 2,000 party members to flock to the racecourse.'

John Westmoreland of Doncaster 4 All said: 'Our event, at Doncaster town fields, aims to celebrate the positive aspects that cultural and ethnic diversity have brought to Donny, as a direct contrast to the UKIP message of intolerance, and will include stalls, music, and a host of family friendly entertainment.'

'The festival will have a strong positive message, that people benefit from living in a town where we all stand together and reject divisive policies which try to pit one group against another. In this Conservative Age of Austerity it is easy to try to scapegoat one group in society and that is what UKIP is doing.'



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Northern Rail and police turn nasty on pensioners

A SLEF's general secretary Mick Whelan spoke out after distressing scenes of frail pensioners being brutally manhandled by burly British Transport Police officers during a peaceful demonstration at Sheffield station were posted on the internet. Online critics condemned the 'disgraceful and outrageous behaviour' of officers – some of whom come from the same area as those South Yorkshire police criticised for what they did at Hillsborough and Orgreave – who used the controversial tactic of kettling, first used by the Met against students protesting about tuition fees, to corral Freedom Ride pensioners and disabled people demonstrating peacefully about savage cuts in travel provision.

Mick said: 'From reading witness statements, and

reviewing the video evidence, it is apparent that the police used excessive force. We don't believe this is the proper way to deal with a peaceful protest by pensioners. The train company has a lot of questions to answer. Were they a party to police tactics? Were their revenue protection officers involved in manhandling the protesters? Do they approve of the actions of these officers? If they do, they should come out and say so. If not, they should condemn what went on.'

Northern Rail later apologised to Alex Evans, a reporter on *The Star*, Sheffield, after forcing him to destroy video footage shot on his mobile phone of police assaulting protesters. 'He said I was committing an arrestable offence under the Terrorism Act. I felt intimidated. But it was clearly in the public interest to report what



was happening.' James Mitchinson, the paper's editor, described what happened as 'absolutely unacceptable.' He added: 'This illustrates just how difficult it can be to report the news when authorities are seeking to manage the news.'

A spokeswoman for Northern Rail said: 'The officer was incorrect to delete the phone footage and

Police 'get stuck in' on disabled people and pensioners protesting about brutal cuts in travel provision in South Yorkshire

we are rebriefing our rapid response team to ensure this does not happen again.'



Jackie Hart, District 5 rep on our LGBT representative committee, with her wife Andi Hart (right) and District Organiser Nigel Gibson at the Labour Party stall at Essex Pride in Chelmsford

East Coast – which has returned £1 billion to the Treasury since being brought back into public ownership – has been voted Britain's best train company by rail passengers. It beat all the privatised train companies in the long distance section of the National Rail Passenger Survey run by Passenger Focus. Mick Whelan said: 'This gives more impetus to all of us who are demanding the East Coast main line stays in public hands for the good of the travelling public – and the Treasury.'

Trainline for sale

The private equity owners of Trainline, the rail booking system created by Virgin and Stagecoach, are reported to be lining up a £400 million flotation. Exponent Private Equity first touted the business in 2010 but hit the brakes in 2012 after attracting a best bid of just £250 million. Trainline sells tickets under licence from the Association of Train Operating Companies, which represents 24 TOCs, but while buying tickets from a train company website is free, Trainline charges a typical fee of £7.50 per transaction. Mick Whelan said: 'It's another example of a private company exploiting passengers and taxpayers to squeeze more private profit out of what should be a public service.'

RECORD NUMBER OF DEATHS ON THE RAILWAY

A record number of people died last year by trespassing or committing suicide on the railways in Britain. Three hundred people were killed, either by taking their own lives or after climbing over fences to gain access to lines where they were not supposed to be. That is 22 more than the year before and the highest figure recorded by the Rail Safety and Standards Board since it started collating statistics ten years ago. Eight people also died on level crossings. The RSSB said: 'Rail is still the safest form of transport on land.'

QUOTE...

'Labour needs to select more Parliamentary candidates with experience of real life if it is to reconnect with working Britain. It needs people from the school of hard knocks, such as train driver Andy Botham, a proven winner dreaming of hoisting the Labour standard in true blue Derbyshire Dales, where Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin will be defending a 14,000 majority. Botham won Matlock for Labour on Derbyshire county council last year for the first time in more than half a century and, in the driving seat, he'd give the Tory Fat Controller a good run for his money.' – Kevin Maguire, associate editor, *Daily Mirror*, in his *Stalking the Corridors of Power* column

...UNQUOTE



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Making the grade

CLIVE CHOWN, lead ULR for South West Trains, reports on recruiting drivers through the grades and his recent learning events in Salisbury

ONE of the things I enjoy about my job as a union learning rep is being in a privileged position where you can genuinely influence someone's life. The informal way I'm able to talk to staff often means they open up more. Take the day in July 2010 when I got chatting to one of the newest members of platform staff. We talked about his responsibilities and duties, what he liked and disliked about his new job. Over the next few

weeks our small talk progressed to me showing him a current vacancy list, introducing myself as a ULR and offering the resources at my disposal. Although the offer of academic courses was not needed, the opportunity to practice assessments, discussing interview techniques and simply being able to talk the process through with someone proved invaluable.

The first successful step came in 2011 when

he wore his guard's uniform for the first time. With a bit more encouragement the final step was taken culminating in the former platform staff becoming a productive driver at the end of last year. That driver is now an active member of his branch wearing his ASLEF badge with pride and singing the praises of the union which made all this possible. Another former colleague of his has taken up English and Maths courses to put him on the path to our grade. So a ULR can influence the future of ASLEF. That's not a bad job to have!

Another side to the role is promoting learning and encouraging employees to request further courses and use resources that are available to them. Two learning events were recently held in Salisbury



Ray Williamson, Clive Chown, Mike Parker, Louise Pocock, Kate Stokes and Peter Miller and (right) Dominic Hill

and very well supported.

The first was sign language, a very popular choice which ran in conjunction with National Deaf Awareness week. The tutor made the classes very enjoyable, bringing both passion and fun together. She had worked hard to prepare a lesson that taught railway-specific terminology; invaluable as the idea is to help employees in the environment in which they work. All learners left with a handy reference pack.

The second saw our quiet room transformed into a place any hotel spa would be proud of, complete with incense burners and music. Inside,



our local reflexology practitioner performed head, shoulder and back massages after a brief consultation. I'm pleased to say all available time slots were snapped up and everyone seemed to enjoy the experience.

A prize draw containing the names of all participants resulted in Dominic Hill from Gate line winning a £20 voucher for WH Smith. Thank you to South West Trains for providing the funds to run the workshops.

QUOTE...

'The Gagging Act is a shockingly bad law. It does absolutely nothing to regulate big money lobbying, but places burdensome restrictions on charities and trade unions. It is a massively political law too – it will make it difficult for third parties to campaign against unpopular government policies in the run up to a general election, and prevent groups like the League Against Cruel Sports from targeting pro-hunting Tory MPs or the National Union of Students from targeting Lib Dems who broke their tuition fees pledge.' – **Andrew Gwynne, Labour MP for Denton and Reddish**

...UNQUOTE

Swedish rail union sees off zero hours



Valle Karlsson, head of negotiations at SEKO (Facket för Service och Kommunikation) the trade union for public service and communication employees in Sweden, has thanked ASLEF for

our support and solidarity during their bitter dispute

with Veolia Transport Sweden, part of the international Transdev group (formerly Connex in the UK).

'Through aggressive underbidding, Veolia won the tender for train operations

between Denmark and Sweden, crossing the Oresund bridge,' said national organiser Simon Weller. 'The price for this underbidding was to be paid by the employees, particularly train drivers. The company proposed laying-off the permanent employed workforce with a new "offer" to re-engage them on zero hours contracts.'

'Currently the company employs 211 train drivers. The impact of the new proposals would have meant that only 107 would be employed, in the future, on a permanent basis, with 67 on zero hours contracts and the remaining 37 were to be made redundant. This cynical move by the company highlights, yet again, the deleterious impact of privatisation on rail workers.'

When Veolia refused to negotiate, SEKO called its members out on strike and, after 16 days, the company caved in.

'Our national strike in the railway sector ended when SEKO, the employers'

association ALMEGA, and the company Veolia signed up to a deal proposed by state mediators,' said Valle. 'Several other Swedish trade unions had given notice of secondary actions, and SEKO was prepared to considerably broaden the strike. The labour dispute ended in a victory for us, and we are now capable of severely limiting the use of contractual, part-time employment in the sector, in favour of full-time employment, thus preventing social dumping and a spiral downwards in terms and conditions.'

'We thank ASLEF, and the ETF, and all of its affiliates for the solidarity shown to us during the conflict.'



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Animals on the line

GREG MORSE looks back at the Polmont rail disaster on 30 July 1984, the lessons which were learned, and examines the risks from stray animals on tracks today

A SUMMER afternoon and the sun shines on a scene serene. It's just after 5.45pm, and the 17.30 from Glasgow to Edinburgh has slowed to 30 mph because of restrictive aspects just beyond Falkirk. Routine stuff – frustrating, maybe – but routine. Until the driver catches sight of a cow from the corner of his eye. The beast is up the bank, doing what cows do best – chewing grass. When the train pulls into Polmont shortly after, the driver tells his second man to inform station staff. As he crosses the platform, the 17.30 from Edinburgh Waverley to Glasgow Queen Street powers by on the down. If the cow had been on the track, or if there had been a herd on the bank, the driver would have stopped, put down detonators, used track circuit clips, and phoned the signalman, but there was no apparent danger...

THIRTEEN KILLED

The 17.30 push-pull service reached 85mph as it passed Polmont signal box and began to take the gentle curve into the cutting beyond. Then the driver, John Tennant, controlling the train from the DBSO, saw a cow on the line in the cutting on the approach to Falkirk High. He slammed on the emergency brake, but the coach struck the animal and dragged its carcass along the track before the leading left-hand wheel flange lifted and rode the top of the rail. When the right-hand wheel lost purchase, the coach clattered along the sleepers before striking the cess rail and veering up the bank. Forward momentum caused it to

slide, twist and collide with the third coach. The second coach was pushed up the opposite side of the cutting, where it divided from the train and turned end-on-end. Thirteen people were killed, and 61 more, including the driver, and two other members of staff, were injured.

The official investigation found there was an element of chance involved, because a specific part of the animal had to be struck at a specific moment, on a specific trajectory, to lift the wheel with sufficient force to derail the train. But as the cow, which weighed about 450kg, had got onto the line via a vandalised fence at an abandoned level crossing, it recommended a review of the way fences were inspected and the way damage was reported. It also recommended that the rule book be changed to make sure large animals within the boundary fence were treated 'as an immediate danger to trains' and that driver-to-shore communication be fitted in the cabs of all trains travelling at 100mph plus.

OBSTACLE DEFLECTORS

As a result, British Rail improved its management of fencing, amended its rules, and invested some £3 million in the National Radio Network, introduced in 1986. The main improvement – from the driver's point of view – was the fitting of obstacle deflectors to the DBSOs and the superior cab structures of the later Mark III and IV driving van trailers. These DVTs feature obstacle deflectors, with a cab constructed from substantial steel beams and pillars, and a frame welded to the main structural members at floor and roof level. They are heavier, and ballasted at the leading pivot, to make them behave more like locomotives in collisions with a big animal.

These measures help explain why we haven't had another



Polmont since Polmont. Indeed, the risk from a derailment after striking an animal is only 0.42% of all train accident risk, which itself is just 6% of the total system risk.

Statistics show we have the safest railway in Europe, but we're all aware of the dangers of complacency; we all know that one SPAD, one failed set of points, or an error could see us back in the late 1990s. That's why we keep an eye on the railway around the world, something that grew in pertinence last year when, in the space of 22 days, we saw four major accidents – a runaway and explosion in Quebec, a derailment in Paris, a high speed derailment in Spain and a collision in Switzerland.

POTENTIAL RISK

At the RSSB we assess international accidents in the light of operations here in Britain. In fact it was an accident in Germany in January 2012 that led to a reassessment of the risk from animals on the line. Like Polmont, this incident involved a push-pull service, running in push mode, derailling when it struck cattle. One passenger was killed; the driver and another passenger were injured. When I presented this to a group of cross-industry operational safety decision makers, the obvious question was 'have we learned from Polmont?'

Because of this – and a non-fatal incident at Letterston Junction in July 2012 – we recommended a re-evaluation of

Aftermath of a crash: the Edinburgh to Glasgow express after it came off the line at Polmont in 1984 (photo Rex Features) and (above right) the memorial to those who died

DBSOs: Driving Trailer Standard Opens were converted from air-conditioned Mark II stock for use on accelerated Glasgow-Edinburgh services from 1979. All had been withdrawn from front line service by the end of 2006.

the potential risk from animal strike incidents. The resulting report reveals that, while the total number of reported animals on the line incidents has fallen by 42% since 2003-04, cases of animals being struck by trains has tripled, mainly due to deer. The deer population, at two million, is the highest for 1,000 years, thanks to milder winters, the planting of winter crops, increased woodland cover and greater connectivity.

Although deer are able to jump fences, the derailment risk is less than with a cow or a horse. The withdrawal of the lightweight DBSOs, the widespread fitting of obstacle deflectors and a general improvement in train crashworthiness means derailment is now less likely.

The report highlights a number of deterrents ranging

LIE OF THE LAND: If a field that usually has crops in suddenly seems to have cattle, then that's worth reporting – farmers should tell Network Rail if they change the use of a field, but it never hurts to check.



The Lord Provost at Waverley station in April 1985; note the TDM equipment on the front of the cab (photo David Christie)

from the bizarre and erratic (such as the use of creosote and moth balls as barrier repellents) to the bizarre and effective (like spreading a concentrated extract of lion dung along the perimeter). That said, the best way to deter deer remains properly erected and maintained fences. With this – and recent incidents like Letterston Junction – in mind, Network Rail has put standards in place to mitigate the different types of fence-related risk evident at different locations.

Animal incursions are a standing item at Network Rail's regular boundary risk management liaison meetings, and will be covered by an 'objects on the line' deep dive review, which started in July and ends in September.

What does all this mean? For one thing, the cab's a much safer place for a driver than it was in 1984; for another, the rail industry can have a degree of confidence that the risk from animal incursion has been reduced by industry improvements in fence management, cab-to-shore communications, and rules for reporting incidents. But while we continue to monitor the situation, we know that the occasional incident can still cause harm, and delays to passengers and goods.

That's why we need to look beyond the trend lines and our own borders when considering where to focus our limited safety resources, and why – if you see a large animal up a bank chewing grass – it's important to report it as soon as you can.

● Greg Morse is the Rail Safety and Standard Board's operational feedback specialist and the rail editor of *Right Track* magazine. The RSSB's special topic report on the risk from big animals can be found at www.rssb.co.uk

The secret EU deal which could undermine us all



In the June *Journal* we published a letter by Paul Williamson under the headline **Trans-Atlantic Trade Deal is Assault on British Democracy**.

Here **KATY PROCTOR**, ASLEF's website editor and conference organiser, sheds a little more light on a treaty that threatens us all



WHAT IS THE TTIP?

The Transatlantic Trade & Investment

Partnership is a free trade and investment treaty being negotiated in secret between the European Union and the USA. As it is, the EU and USA enjoy a strong trade and investment relationship and tariffs between the EU and the US are already at minimal levels, so why are companies and business lobbyists so keen to see this new deal signed? ASLEF's executive committee is keen to promote awareness of the dangers of this proposed treaty, and to mobilise opposition against it.

DEREGULATION

The main aim of the TTIP is to remove those barriers which restrict the profits that transnational corporations can make. The problem is that what global corporations perceive as barriers include vital, and entirely sensible, regulations protecting our labour rights, food safety, digital privacy laws and banking safeguards. While it might be handy for profit-driven corporations if they didn't have to comply with social and environmental regulations – many would like to live in a free market Wild West with no rules or regulations at all – but it would definitely not be in our interest.

PUSHING PRIVATISATION

Another aim of the TTIP is to open up public services and government procurement contracts to competition from

transnational corporations. Already much of our health and education sectors are undergoing gradual privatisation – from children's social services to care homes for the elderly and from ambulance services to the railways – and TTIP would accelerate this transformation of public services into new privately-run sectors. The aim is to make a private profit at public expense.

UNDERMINE PARLIAMENT

One of the most worrying aspects of the TTIP is that it will enable foreign investors to sue governments for loss of potential profits resulting from public policy decisions. The Investor-State Dispute Settlement effectively transfers power from the government to transnational companies by allowing them to seek compensation for social and environmental regulations which stand in the way of their voracious business interests, and could deter governments from passing legislation on employment rights, health and environmental protection, or human rights.

WAR ON WANT

Jackie Simpkins works for the charity War on Want, who have been running a national tour to raise awareness of TTIP and build a campaign against it. She says: 'TTIP poses an enormous threat



to public services, the environment, and even the food we eat. If it is allowed to proceed, we will see a shift of power from national governments to multinational corporations, with little or no chance of individuals being able to challenge or affect change by democratic means.'

REPERCUSSIONS

Mick Whelan, ASLEF's general secretary, explains that TTIP could lead to higher levels of unemployment and a downgrading of labour standards in Europe. 'It would make it easier for companies to source goods and services from the USA, where labour standards are lower, and for them to demand the eradication of labour rights, like collective bargaining and the right to organise, on the grounds that they restrict their business model and profit margins. Trade unionists, civil society groups and politicians need to be aware of what is going on and voice their opposition before businesses replace governments both in providing services and in controlling regulatory standards.'

● ASLEF is looking at ways of campaigning against TTIP. For more information visit www.waronwant.org



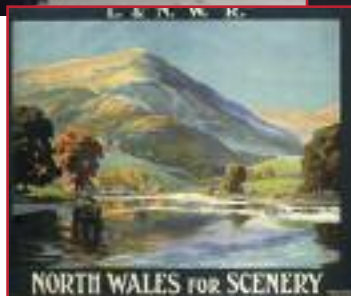
Bread of heaven



District 7 Organiser
BRIAN CORBETT
writes about the
challenges and the future
for the railways in Wales

IT IS now becoming very clear that the railway in Wales is a real growth industry, especially in the passenger sector, although much more work needs to be done in the freight companies. It's high time that national politicians really adopted a more proactive approach in demanding that more freight transfers from our clogged up roads to the railway. The environmental issues are very well documented in regard to passenger and freight traffic, and this is the right time to act, before another oil crisis.

We really need to welcome the fact that the South Wales area is now going ahead with electrification, going through the Severn Tunnel to Cardiff, then onto Swansea; it's a massive boost not only to the railway but it will also act as a real boost for the whole Welsh economy, creating work and jobs.



While the main line is being electrified, just as positive is the news that the Welsh Valleys will also be having the wires put up as well. On the possible downside is what form of traction will be used for the Valleys? Of course, we would hope that brand new trains will be built to serve the needs of the travelling public, but we fear we will have to put up with 30 year old clapped out stock. Let's see...

The Welsh Assembly in Cardiff and the Conservative-led coalition government at Westminster have been having an issue over

who will pay for the Valleys' upgrades; the row should not deflect attention from the need for the work to be carried out.

We should not forget the Heart of Wales line and services in North Wales which have also been improved, thanks to the Assembly, compared with the neglected state they were in at one time.

It is without doubt the Assembly Ministers, Assembly Members and local MPs who have done a tremendous lot of work to promote the railways in Wales and also the financial support

First Great Western farce



We have submitted our views to the DfT's consultation on the future of the Great Western franchise. MICK WHELAN explains our response

ASLEF has submitted its response to the Great Western specification consultation. The award of this contract will result in First Great Western getting guaranteed income with virtually no risk – and no incentive to actually improve performance!

While ASLEF supports many of the objectives of the Department for Transport we find it hard to see how creating a short term direct award or franchise will enable targets to be hit during the terms of the interim arrangements. Western needs more high speed trains to

provide greater capacity at peak times and Worle requires HSTs to stop at the station in order to meet the demand for rail in the town.

There are major issues which require real solutions. Crossrail should help relieve some of the overcrowding between Reading and Paddington by December 2019. And we welcome the electrification of the Great Western main line, which will reduce carbon emissions and improve reliability and comfort. Perhaps most importantly, it will increase the number of seats by 20%.

That's why we are very

concerned by the current dispute over the funding of electrification between the Welsh government and Westminster. It's important this dispute is resolved and the extremely important infrastructure work does not get delayed because delays would mean electrification is not complete in time for the introduction of the new intercity express rolling stock.

ASLEF is extremely concerned over the direct award of contracts being used on the Great Western franchise and the wider rail network. One of the selling points of privatisation was the idea that competition would drive standards, efficiency and innovation. The problem is that the franchise system just creates a series of private sector monopolies and the fallacy of competition is even more undermined by these awards.

The award of a six month extension, and then a two year extension, means First has got the franchise for an annual sum of £32

million. Despite the fact that First Great Western walked away from the initial contract option to run the line until 2015 to avoid payments of up to £800m to the government!

It is hard to see this deal as anything other than a bad deal for the taxpayer. This is especially true when Directly Operated Railways, who have turned the East Coast main line into the most successful operator on the network, returning £1 billion to the DfT, was available to take on the franchise. Yet, despite this, First Group was able to set its terms as a sole bidder. Once again, on the rail network, private profit has been prioritised over taxpayer and passenger value along with quality of service.

The constant short term and ad hoc contract decisions made across our network since the West Coast debacle hinder long term strategic thinking and investment.

They are yet more examples of the failures of the franchise model on our railway.



His kind fire in Llaregyb's land

In this brief report it would be amiss of me if we didn't begin by placing on record our thanks to Stan Moran on his retirement from the industry. Stan always did his best for everyone he represented in our district and will be sorely missed. Brian Corbett succeeds Stan and inherits a district that has come together, and runs smoothly, and we look forward to working closely with Brian in the future.

At Arriva Trains Wales we have seen the benefit this year of the second year of a two year pay deal that has delivered 3% when RPI was running at 2.4%.

Arriva has made application to ASLEF for a rest day working agreement and this has been granted, on a short term basis, for council to resolve some issues over ill health retirement, to name but one. The company meets ASLEF's criteria in that it is recruiting drivers throughout the business and has an extensive training programme in the months ahead.

Council has been in talks and set up a sub group to look at Drivers' Advisory Systems and it is hoped that we will be able to see the executive committee in the very near future with an offer for consideration. We are also actively pursuing a deal for the maximum turn length to be 9 hours 30 minutes with PNBs between the 3rd and 5th hour and a job share scheme that would, once again, benefit us all.



Former DO Stan Moran, who retired earlier this year, proudly wears his Welsh green tie with John Boreham and Mick Whelan at the Welsh Labour Party conference in Llandudno

We are also in talks with the National Assembly for Wales over electrification which is a matter that will have a great impact on all of us in Wales. Our full time officer is in the process of organising meetings with the Assembly Members down in Cardiff Bay, and more news will be forthcoming in the near future, when we have a resolution as to who's paying for what. All in all, a busy time in the next six months for council.

John Boreham, Arriva Trains Wales company council

given by the Assembly over a number of years. This is why, as a trade union, we need to keep the pressure up on the political front, regardless of the political colour of the party in power.

As the ASLEF organiser in Wales, along with the general secretary and my company council colleagues, I shall be looking for regular meetings to put over our views and promote the railways here in Wales for the benefit of the travelling public, and the firms who send their goods by rail as well as for all of us who depend for our livelihoods on the railway.

HONoured AMONG FOXES

Delegates at the Welsh TUC in Llandudno in May reaffirmed their commitment to a publicly owned, publicly accountable railway in Wales after Mick Whelan, our general secretary, ripped apart the privatisation prospectus.

'They told us that privatisation would drive competition,' he recalled. 'But there is no competition because they have created geographical monopolies, with no risk and no innovation.'

Mick pointed out that it costs £519 million to run the Great Western service every year while income amounts to £570million. 'That's over £50 million a year going out of the industry, which could be used for investment in the railways.'

Clive Jones said the railways had been privatised simply to satisfy political ideology, noting that 'even Thatcher refused to go down the road of rail privatisation.' He called for a wave of public pressure to win the battle for renationalisation. 'Public support to return our railways to public ownership is growing year by year.'

Fierce the beacon's light is flaming

The ASLEF rule book states that the aims and objectives of this trade union are to secure the best terms and conditions for train drivers, to negotiate with employers on your behalf, to promote a pride in our craft, to champion equality, to provide education services, and to work for a fairer, more just, and socialist society. 'And that's what we do,' says Brian Corbett, pictured here (right) with former ASLEF president, and Port Talbot delegate, Clive Jones at the Welsh Trades Union Congress at the Venue Cymru in Llandudno in May. 'Engaging politically, as well as industrially, is a vital part of the job,' says Brian, who was elected DO earlier this year when Stan Moran

retired. Here he is (right) with S Williams (LDC), Bev Corbett, author, journalist and activist Owen Jones, Julie James (Assembly Member for Swansea West) and Sandra Richards (AM support) at a Swansea West Labour Party fund raiser.



Lead me all my journey through



EDWINA HART says the industry is on track to deliver the modern, efficient and effective service passengers want

THE social and economic benefits generated by our railways became evident when the storm damage to the rail network in January disrupted services for thousands of commuters, schoolchildren and local businesses. This was especially true for people depending on services along the Cambrian line. The temporary loss of these services demonstrated the invaluable contribution that our railways make to the community and social fabric of Wales.

It also showed, once again, the commitment of rail workers to keeping passengers moving and getting services up and running as soon as possible. Rail workers can be proud of, and deserve to be recognised for, the success of the Welsh railways. We have seen passenger numbers grow consistently and that growth is built on the efforts of all those working as part of the rail system.

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

I am equally proud of the Welsh government's commitment to supporting rail services and our programme of investment in our rail infrastructure priorities. Part of this investment programme, amounting to more than £154 million over three years, is our multi-million pound investment to extend the Ebbw Valley service into the town centre at Ebbw Vale. This will further stimulate the local economy and improve accessibility to the employment centres at Cardiff and beyond. Since its re-introduction, following the Beeching cuts to our railways in 1962, this passenger service has



continued to exceed our expectations.

In south-west Wales, we have improved capacity on all Pembroke Dock services and two Swansea to Cardiff services have been extended to Newport and Gowerton, now served by an additional 95 services every week.

From May 2015 our investment in the Heart of Wales line will result in strengthened services operating between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury, between Llandoverly and Gowerton/Swansea and between Llandrindod and Shrewsbury/Crewe. We have also invested in improved evening services on the Cambrian coast between Barmouth and Pwllheli.

I recognise the importance of rail services for our more rural areas, which is why I am seeking views on the additional rail services between Fishguard and Carmarthen introduced by the Welsh government in 2011. I have asked local groups to carry out a survey about the difference the services have made to the local community, and I look forward to receiving their findings.

Our investment in upgrading the rail network in north-east Wales will reduce journey times between North and South Wales and deliver increased capacity between Wrexham and Chester, and plans are being developed for an integrated metro transport system in south-east Wales.

INCREASED CAPACITY

As well as investing in increased capacity, and additional rail services, we must ensure that people are better able to access them. Our investment in Swansea High Street station is a beacon for accessibility standards on our railways. Many of the elements to improve

accessibility in the award-winning £7.6 million refurbishment project surpass compliance standards and have made the station easier to navigate. As well as individual elements such as a tactile guidance path for blind and partially sighted people, improved natural lighting, use of colour contrast and reduction of clutter around the station, the project has been commended for the way it was managed throughout, including consulting with disability groups.

In March, the Silk commission published its second report on devolution in Wales, recommending devolution of further transport powers on rail, including a greater role in the appointment of cross border rail franchise operators, to support better integrated transport in Wales.

DEVOLVED SETTLEMENT

The Silk report and the charter for the next Wales and Borders franchise published by the National Assembly for Wales' enterprise and business committee in December make the case for an improved devolved settlement.

Subject to a fair financial settlement, increasing the Welsh government's responsibility for railway services would provide the opportunity to design rail services tailored to the needs of Wales into the future.

Rail can improve our economic competitiveness through improved access to jobs and services and through the employment generated directly by the rail sector; it can enhance social cohesion by improving links between our communities and it can secure a better deal for passengers in Wales by offering an affordable alternative to using the private car for work and leisure.

At present, these issues remain outside the scope of the powers of Welsh ministers but, irrespective of that, we continue to work with the rail industry, the Department for Transport, and Network Rail, to secure the modern, efficient and effective rail service that the people of Wales expect.

View from the Valleys

RHODRI MORGAN says rail is the glue that holds the region together

Cardiff doesn't stand alone as a capital city. It is very much part of a city region and always has been. The modern city developed because of the explosive growth of the coal mining and iron industry in the Valleys hinterland. City regions are all the rage now, but applying the label of city region to



south-east Wales makes no difference. What makes the difference is the transport system. That's the glue that holds the city region together. When the main line electrification from Paddington to Cardiff is completed by 2017 and Swansea by 2018, the Valleys lines will be done next, maybe by 2021. We would all wish to see a south-east Wales city region with prosperity spread much more evenly across the area. It all depends on those rail electrification projects.

Edwina Hart, Labour AM for Gower, was born and brought up in Gowerton. She was president of BIFU, now part of Unite, and is Minister for Economy, Science and Transport in the Welsh government

I always get my way if I strike for higher pay



Employers, lobbyists and right-wing MPs are pressing David Cameron to restrict a worker's right to withdraw his or her labour. GREGOR GALL reveals what could be in the next Conservative manifesto

As the next general election draws closer – and it's now just nine months away – it's worth examining whether the Tories will fight it on a manifesto of further curtailing the right to strike and take industrial action in this country. It is, right-wingers say, one of the more glaring omissions from their period of coalition government with the Liberal Democrats since 2010 and there have been calls – not least from that right-wing rent-a-quote Boris Johnson – to proceed with such legislation if they are re-elected in May next year.

There would appear to be three reasons – the Conservatives' Age of Austerity agenda, the lack of resistance, and case law on injunctions – so the government has taken a cautious approach to the law governing industrial action because it feels it's had bigger fish to fry with regard to restructuring the welfare state, transforming the public sector, reducing the national debt and stimulating the economy.

WILL OF THE WORKERS

While it's made some major changes to employment tribunals and TUPE, it's held its fire on strikes because, although unions have engaged in a war of words with the government, they have not yet engaged in much of a war itself. The mass strike on 30 November 2011 over pension reform proved to be the exception, not the rule.

Then there's the narrowing through case law interpretation of the right to strike in the last few years. The most obvious examples

were successful applications for injunctions against our sister unions in the transport sector, the RMT and Unite, over disputes involving British Airways, Network Rail, First London buses and Metrobus. Marginal technicalities were often used to prevent strikes and thwart the will of the workers.

It is unclear what the long term impact of the successful appeal rulings for the RMT (against Serco DLR) and ASLEF (against London Midland) in early 2011 has been in pushing back these restrictions. After those rulings, 14 more injunctions were made by the end of 2013 (with 17 more applications for injunctions threatened). This compares to 15 applications, and 13 threatened, since 2010 and before the successful appeals.

BAN ON STRIKES

So why would the situation change in the run up to the general election?

For three reasons. First, the Conservatives need to present fresh ideas and a fresh image after a term in government. Recently, they tried to relaunch themselves as the workers' party and part of this will be to protect workers from the scourge of industrial action by other workers. Second, there is the opportunity for the Tories to continue restructuring the economy, and British society, in neo-liberal fashion and trade unions are the major impediment to their doing so. Third, to satisfy the right-wing of the party and see off the challenge of UKIP.

So what proposals might we see in the next Conservative Party manifesto?



John Cridland, director general of the CBI (above) Dominic Raab, MP for Esher and Walton (above centre) and London Mayor Boris Johnson (right) are putting pressure on David Cameron (above right) to ban strikes in public services



They won't have to look far. The Confederation of British Industry, Policy Exchange, Dominic Raab MP, and the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development have all called for a lawful mandate for industrial action to become one in which a simple majority (50% + 1) for action must also equate to 40% of all those entitled to vote. This would mean that those not voting are counted as No votes – an electorally, and democratically, risible idea. London Mayor Boris Johnson has called for a 50% minimum turnout in ballots for a strike on the Tube. Occasionally, the idea of a ban on strikes in essential services – such as transport, communications, hospitals, etc – is also mentioned.

POLITICAL HURDLES

The intended target of these calls is not strikes or industrial action *per se* but those which are effective in shutting down the operations of an employer and which have a major impact on the economy. The intention is not to restrict the right to strike so much as the right to an *effective* strike. This mostly means those in transport where high union density, the immediate impact of the action, the perishability of the

service, and the unavailability of substitute services means strikes are very effective.

As such lower political hurdles would be needed for the proposal that a simple majority (50% + 1) for action must also equate to 40% of all those entitled to vote. This is because no ban *per se* is required, so not seemingly contradicting international law and labour standards.

Johnson's suggestion of a 50% minimum turnout is not a runner because it could still lead to minorities getting a mandate for action (eg if 100 are entitled to vote and 51% do and 26 voting yes still beat 25 voting no). That no election for public office is currently regulated in such a way, in terms of voting and turnout thresholds, does not seem to matter to the advocates of these schemes.

What remains to be seen is what Labour's affiliated unions, including ASLEF, will do to press for the inclusion of measures in the Labour Party manifesto which will at least reverse the employers' ability to use tiny technical points to stop strikes. This was the intention of John McDonnell's private members' bill, the *Lawful Industrial Action (Minor Errors) Bill* in 2010.

Gregor Gall is Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of Bradford, Visiting Lecturer in International Labour and Trade Union Studies at Ruskin College, Oxford, and a visiting lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire



Notts drivers take aim (and not a longbow in sight)



Guns and ammunition

The LLC was trying to organise a day out in Nottingham but couldn't come up with anything new, or interesting, that hadn't been done before when Chris Atkins suggested we all go clay pigeon shooting. This appealed, as none of us had done it before, so we gave Chris the task of

organising the day! A month later 20 of Nottingham's finest turned up on a cloudy Sunday morning at Haywood Oaks where we were briefed by gun club instructors Dave and Curtis. Once we all understood which way to point the gun, and how to fire, we set off for a fun-filled couple of

hours, culminating in a 10 shot competition. This was taken very seriously and, after a hard-fought shoot-off, we had our champion. None other than Chris Atkins, with Martin Fry coming a close second. Everyone enjoyed it so much we are now thinking of starting our own team.

Andy Wakefield,
ULR local rep



Nigel Gibson, DO District 5; Dick Fisher, DO District 6; Howard Kaye EC member District 5; and Ray Jackson, Tony West, Peter Smith and Alan Taylor of the RMS joined members of Lincoln branch for their meeting in June. Nick Parker, of Lincoln TUC, gave a frank and informative report on the TUC's activities in the area before RMS officers gave a report on its activities and what it does for the members of ASLEF and their families. They thanked Lincoln for supporting the 500 Club, its fundraiser, which helps promote educational activities for members. The RMS affiliates to the National Pensioners' Convention which campaigns on behalf of pensioners, and also has a voice at the TUC. Thanks for the invitation and hospitality, we are pleased to see Lincoln is an active and thriving branch.

Peter Smith, RMS

○ Please send your branch news and photos to journal@aslef.org.uk

Upcoming events

○ NORTHAMPTON – SATURDAY 16 AUGUST

Informal gathering from 16.00 at the Old Black Lion, across the road from the station, to commemorate 20 years since the closure of Northampton BR train crew depot. All welcome! Come along and reminisce about one of the finest train crew depots there ever was. Cold buffet provided. Details from Graham Croucher on 07841 678018.

○ RAINHAM – THURSDAY 2 OCTOBER

Southeastern retired members' reunion from 11.00 at Rainham Social Club, 86 Station Rd, Rainham, Kent.

○ MARYLEBONE – FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

Anyone associated with Marylebone branch – past or present – welcome at our annual reunion from 17.00 at the Thornbury. Details from R Gordon-Hill on 07956 025551.

Leamington Spa branch had an excellent turnout, with almost 50% of the membership, at our latest meeting, where we were joined by Dave Calfe, EC member District 6, and Bob Earlam, London Midland company council. Dave spoke first on national issues: a reduction in disputes with franchises, mobile phone use whilst driving, the state of the political fund, the small rise in union subs, quarterly meetings with Network Rail on operations and rules



Ian Farey (left) gets his 35 year badge from executive committee member Dave Calfe

issues. Bob then spoke on more local LM issues including staff first class travel on LM services, driver training, the new DAS system and fitment to the fleet, LM's policy on e-cigarettes, the move in health

provider from BUPA to Capita, and discussions for a short extension to rest day working. Thanks Dave and Bob; we look forward to further visits from you soon.

Nick Walker,
branch reporter

Scotland the brave

This branch recognises that the forthcoming referendum on Scottish independence is one of the most important decisions facing our members, and the working-class generally, in a generation. We uphold the traditions of the Labour movement, holding democratic debate as a central principle of our union. We recognise the decision taken at the 2013 AAD to commit ASLEF to the Better Together campaign and to campaign against Scottish independence. We would like to engage the lay membership in serious discussion of this subject. Edinburgh No 2 branch commits to organising a debate on Scottish independence with invited speakers in favour of and opposed to independence. This meeting will be an open meeting, and will be advertised in all relevant workplaces in such a way as to maximise attendance, and will extend an invitation to all ASLEF members. Further, we urge all other branches and union officials to facilitate similar debates across the country.

Rab Wicksted, Edinburgh No 2

Barking main line held its quarterly meeting at our new venue, Cromwell Manor, and as we had two 35 year badges to hand out to John Donald and Steve Goode invited Mick Whelan down to present them; a request never before made in the branch's 41 years of running. The GS duly obliged with DO Nigel Gibson and Howard Kaye, EC member District 5, in tow.

Mick spoke about the importance of



unity, saying that as one we are strong, divided we are gone. An argument echoed by Steve, when receiving his badge, in a passionate speech

about the importance of being in ASLEF and about the time he needed the union it was there to safeguard his job. Thanks to Mick & co for coming at

such short notice, and all who attended, to make this a special night for John and Steve.

Andy Hymas,
branch secretary

40 years for God

Alan Hayes started his railway career at Allerton depot, Liverpool, on 19 August 1972, as a carriage cleaner, thinking he'd do this until something better came along. Soon he was shunting at Allerton – hard work and long hours – and 12 months in remembers a rainy night, and there he was coupling a DMU,

when he looked up to see the shed driver in his cab – 'nice and warm and dry' – and thought he could do that so applied to become a second man at Garston. He passed out October 1974, moved to Kirkdale in 1984, became a minder driver, an instructor, and was awarded a certificate of achievement for preventing a



Mick (left) presents Alan with his 40 year badge and tankard

potentially nasty incident. All in all, not a bad journey, lots of laughs, a few hard times and countless good mates. 'I guess nothing better came

along!' 'You couldn't get a more respected person; no wonder people here refer to him as God.

Keith Devling,
branch secretary

Shoebury back on map

There was a really good turnout with 28 members attending the Shoeburyness branch meeting at the Ambleside social club near Southend East along with our District 5 Organiser Nigel Gibson making a guest appearance. Nigel explained his progression into the role after the sudden death of Andy Morrison and went on to talk about the fight the union is having regarding TOCs wanting to install in cab CCTV equipment; the union won't accept it in any guise. Nigel also highlighted current ASLEF campaigns

including Action for Rail and the political fund.

We had a company council report by Mark Burrows highlighting TPWS reset and the risks and possibilities of criminal prosecution with failure of not acting accordingly with rules; an LDC report from Ronnie Rylance highlighting the ongoing battle with train planning over engineering work diagrams due to Pitsea Junction renewal; and an H&S report from Paul Clarke, including the new walking route at East Ham depot being risk assessed. All in all a very productive night. Hope to see you at the next branch.

Mike Johnson, branch secretary

BADGE OF PRIDE

Salisbury replaced its June ordinary meeting with a badge presentation evening where, amongst others, a 50 year medallion and two 40 year badges were presented to members. Massive thanks to Marz Colombini, District 1 EC member, for stepping in at the last minute to present the badges.
Annie Rutter, branch secretary



Mick Holder looks back to August 1914 when the world went to war

THE DOWN TOOLS MOVEMENT

There is no mention in the pages of the August issue of the *Locomotive Journal* that Britain was about to declare war on Germany at 11pm on Tuesday 4 August 1914. There was, though, a lengthy report of the sixth annual conference of the National Federation of Enginemen, Stokers and Kindred Societies in Chester. There were only 14 delegates but they represented nine societies with an aggregate membership of 60,500 enginemen and firemen employed on the railway as well as in collieries, on fishing vessels and in the textile trade. They discussed strikes under 'the down tools movement' and called on parliament to legislate for an eight hour working day.

ATTENDING CORONERS' COURTS

A resolution moved by ASLEF and adopted by conference read: 'This conference instructs the executive committee of the federation to draft a Bill to obtain for trade union officials the right to attend coroners' inquests and Board of Trade inquiries with full powers to examine and cross-examine witnesses.' Under the Coroners' Act 'no one, not even a solicitor, has a right to attend and examine witnesses in a coroner's court unless allowed by the coroner to do so.' The object of the resolution was to give representatives of the deceased the right to attend and examine witnesses.

MANY YEARS BEHIND AMERICA

George Smith wrote to the *Journal* pointing out the failings of the government to properly investigate train crashes. 'Two investigating bodies have lately been constituted, the Royal Commission and the Safety Committee, but the large class of serious and even fatal wrecks is definitely and officially excluded from the work of both sets of investigators. The seriousness of the situation becomes evident when it is remembered that the two excluded classes comprise more than 80% of the fatal wrecks on British railways in the last five years.' The failure of inspectors following 12 listed disasters to make recommendations to prevent further incidents (such as the provision of track circuits and audible and visual cab signals) prompts him to call for an end to this 'backwardness', saying 'We are many years behind America in automatic signalling.'

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Burston strike school rally

Sunday 7 September 2014 10.45am
Church Green, Burston, near Diss, Norfolk,
IP22 5TP



The line up at the rally this year to celebrate the centenary of the **Burston strike school**, the longest strike in history, when schoolchildren went on strike to support teachers sacked by the rural squirearchy for having the temerity to help organise downtrodden agricultural workers, includes:

Owen Jones, journalist, activist and author

Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North

Pete Kavanagh, Unite regional secretary

Megan Dobney, SERTUC regional secretary

Mike Ward, Burston trustee

Roy Bailey, socialist folk singer

Thee Faction, socialist rhythm & blues

The NASUWT brass band

TheatreTrain children's musical theatre



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IAN NEEVE LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

'I'll send you truckloads of flowers / From all the worlds that you stole from me.' That line, from *The Wild, The Beautiful and The Damned* by Ultravox, was a favourite of Ian Neeve, who died in May after a brave battle with pancreatic cancer.

'General layabout. Early punk rocker. Classical education. Live life to the full and believe party politics, like religion, is a spent force. Anarchy 4 the UK.' That was how Ian described himself. He was born and brought up in Peterborough and, as an avid Peterborough United fan, was quick to tell anyone who would listen that he was Posh, not posh. In 1977, as the haze of dope and glory of Woodstock slipped away and was replaced by the Sex Pistols, *Sniffin' Glue* and Mohican haired teenagers doing the Blitzkrieg Bop along the King's Road, Ian 'Emu' Neeve, as the young vocalist was then known, formed a punk rock group with Pete Howsam on keyboards,

Simon Page on guitar, Matthew Gillatt on bass and Paul Vjestica on drums. The Dole played on the same bill as bands such as The Radiators and 999 and released a couple of records – including their hit single *New Wave Love c/w Hungry Men No Longer Steal Sheep, But Are There Hanging Judges?* – on Ultimate Records before, as is the way with these things, splitting up. He then did a short stint as singer with The Name, a mod revival band, before 'getting a proper job' and becoming a train driver and ASLEF activist.

Ian held many branch positions, including considerable periods as secretary and chair, and was a regular delegate at AAD. He was also a long-serving company councillor and, before that, local rep. Along with the other reps we have Ian to thank for our current terms and conditions which are among the best remaining around the network. He was a very popular



Ian as a 17-year-old punk rocker (right); as a train driver and union activist (above); and the single by his band The Dole

figure and his funeral, at Peterborough crematorium on 16 May, was packed.

Away from the railway he was passionate about music, politics and sport (cricket and rugby as well as football) and the punk spirit of '77 lived on. In June last year Ian tweeted: 'Just like to say well done, Marylebone branch, for a cracking attendance for the GS today and thank Mick for taking the time.' And, a little later, 'I call on all trade unions to leave the Labour Party and find ordinary well educated working people to stand in their own seats as Real Labour.' He wrote: 'As the workers gradually lose faith in the capitalist system through the reduction of living standards they will see that a complete reconstruction of society is the only solution which will eventually lead to the abolition of all poverty and oppression.' And, on a lighter note, 'Aaagh! Sometimes I despair.



Had somebody come in while I had some vinyl on the deck. "Wow," he said. "That sounds as good as a CD!" Rest easy, mate.

Ronald Gordon-Hill, Marylebone

○ I would like to thank Ian's colleagues who attended his funeral. Their support, kind thoughts, wishes and stories meant a lot to me and helped give Ian a great send off. I would also like to thank you for the flowers and donations. I have sent Cancer Research a cheque for £555.

Jack Neeve, Peterborough

DEWI LEWIS GENTLEMAN



With great sadness we report the passing of Dewi Lewis (1926-2014). Dewi started work at Machynlleth before moving up into the Midlands to Tyseley, and then Stratford-upon-Avon, where many ex-Stratford men remember him with great fondness. A gentleman who will be greatly missed by all his old friends and colleagues, a few of which remain at Leamington Spa.

Nick Walker, Leamington Spa

LAST JOURNEYS

Sad to report the death of **Norman Montgomery** at the age of 87. Monty started at Hither Green in 1942 and spent his entire career on the footplate there. Also **Derek Hardiman**, 86, who started on the footplate at New Cross Gate in 1941, and moved to Bricklayers Arms, then Charing Cross and Grove Park. And **Taffy Bevan**, 87, who started at New Cross Gate in 1942, and also worked at Bricklayers Arms, Charing Cross and Grove Park. I had the pleasure of working with all three of these men and it is sad to know they have now gone.

Ray Cooper, Hither Green RMS

MICK JOY UNION MAN

Mick Joy, a very good union activist, has passed away. Mick held several positions for ASLEF: LDC rep at Stratford and at Liverpool Street, branch chairman at Stratford for several years; he certainly did his bit for the union. Mick and I did not always see eye to eye but he always did his bit to represent his point of view. Not a mess room lawyer, always prepared to speak up, we will miss the battles we used to have. RIP Mick.

Dave Pizzie, RMS

FINAL DEPARTURES

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of two stalwart drivers, **Mick Sparrow** and **John Tisdell**. John had been at Fratton since the 1950s. His stories were well received in the mess. One of many was how he was awarded a bicycle for long service and went to collect it only to find it had been stolen from the store! Mick spent his later years at Fratton having driven trains at Woking and Guildford. Both John and Mick were well motivated trade unionists, well respected by their colleagues, and will be sorely missed by those who worked with them. **John Glazebrook, Portsmouth & Isle of Wight branch**



We welcome letters, either by email to journal@aslef.org.uk or by Royal Mail to **ASLEF Journal at 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN**. Each month the writer of our **star letter** wins a rich range of ASLEF regalia.



What price independence?

As the referendum on Scottish independence is looming I thought I would make a few points which may, or may not, influence members in the vote.

I have read the SNP's White Paper in which Alex Salmond states that Norway and Denmark 'enjoy an independence bonus that allows them to deliver fairer societies.' That's fair and well but at what cost? Mr Salmond also states 'there will be no requirement for an independent Scotland to raise the general rate of taxation to fund existing levels of spending' so from where exactly will the revenue come? Well, if we look at the economies of Norway and Denmark maybe we will see.

Let's say we want to buy a loaf of bread. In the UK it costs on average £1.03 but in Norway it is £2.38 and in Denmark £1.87; 33cl of water here is 93p but £2.23 in Norway and £1.35 in Denmark; starting rate for a taxi ride in the UK is £2.72, £6.68 in Norway and £5.76 in Denmark. Now let's buy a car! A VW Golf 1.4 is £16,000 in the UK but £26,730 in Norway and £19,756 in Denmark. A pair of Levi 501s are £58.81 here, but £83.50 in Norway and £68.83 in Denmark; a pair of Nike Air Max trainers in the UK is £57.77 but in Norway is £94.44 and in Denmark £69.57. VAT is 20% in the UK but 25% in Norway and Denmark.

The real thing that worries me is that there will be a significant decrease in demand for our oil and gas, due to technological improvements, with electric cars becoming more desirable and affordable. Another thing the White Paper does not explain is that Scotland will not automatically become a member of the EU, and then there is the matter of the currency. Pound or no pound, that is the question?

Having considered all the above, I don't believe independence offers us in Scotland any better a life in future as we have now. We have the prospect of more devolution which is like having our cake and eating it. But the choice is yours. Yes or No, that's democracy.

Wullie Simpson, Ayr branch secretary

We will be heard

I had the pleasure of attending the Bathgate open branch meeting which attempted to address the imbalance of the Yes/No question, which many members in this trade union feel they have been denied, with a speaker from both the No and Yes campaigns and, although not hugely attended, members took part in a lively

HOW SPEAKING UP CAN PREVENT INJURIES HAPPENING TO OTHERS

On 8 May 2013 I suffered a hand injury at Bletchley CE sidings when I fractured a finger, with the skin broken, causing heavy bleeding, due to the gates there. After a visit to A&E I decided to see if I had cause for a claim and, after a phone call to ASLEF, was contacted by Thompsons solicitors. My claim against Network Rail was successful and I have been offered compensation (I won't say how much

as it is private to me). So I would like to thank the following – ASLEF, Lyndsey Allen at Thompsons solicitors, and my colleagues at Colas, especially Dave Felkins and Steve Bott, for your help and support. The aim originally was to try and prevent similar accidents; there was at least one but, hopefully, no more. Many thanks to you all!
Andy Collins, Colas Rail, New Street branch

debate. Richie Venton from the SSP spoke on behalf of the Yes campaign and gave a committed and convincing talk; but I felt the speaker from the No side merely spoke on his vision to return Labour to the left party we all long for, which I felt was more a forlorn hope than a positive case for Scotland. Although only 11 were in attendance on the floor 90% of these were pro-independence which again makes a mockery of the decision to back the Better Together campaign.

I also take issue with the wording of the letter sent out to members regarding pensions stating 'if the Nationalists win'. Well, as I pointed out to Bro Lindsay, it is not the Nationalists who will determine this vote, it will be the people of Scotland. In his defence, Bro Lindsay did state that it should not have gone out like that; however, to me, that underlying message was intended to go out, and indeed did. This is not a battle between nationalism and the Labour movement and it is very sad that our union

gave that impression in the letter. With one in five Scots now living in poverty it stuns me that the union could believe that Better Together is the way to go.

On the back of this meeting I attended the branch meeting in Edinburgh (I'm sure that will raise a smile) and moved a motion for a meeting to be held in Edinburgh open to all ASLEF members in Scotland to address the independence debate and I'm glad to say this was passed. Drivers will vote in September either Yes or No but, thanks to the members from Bathgate and, indeed, Scotland, that were prepared not to lie down and be ignored we will have our say and we will be heard.

Liam Tansey, Edinburgh

Wrong routing Scotland

Just as I wrote (*Journal*, July) about negative campaigning, Bro Tom Burns of Perth branch was delivering the mandatory misleading rhetoric. Since Scotland is in an international

Thank Hugh very much

I would like to thank all those branches in District 2 who nominated me to continue in the role of executive committee member. I would also like to thank the activists and the membership for your continued support and look forward to working with you and representing you once again.

Hugh Bradley, EC member District 2



Hugh was re-elected unopposed

treaty with England over its political union with Westminster, then England will have to reapply for membership to the EU also; fancy rejoining? With just 3,000 shipbuilding jobs in Scotland now, down from 29,000 in 1979, only 520 jobs rely on Faslane; well down from the 12,000 Tom quotes. Tom has forgotten that Scotland will need to build its own fleet of ships, and forgotten it was the threat of indy that protected Scotstoun from closure.

The unelected House of Lords debated Scottish independence, claiming nationalism is wrong, then claimed we will be a different race after indy. I wonder how Tom can support the underlying nationalism in England and the steady rise of UKIP? As more Scottish Labour voters move over to the Yes campaign, it shows that the nasty Nationalists who believe in ending Westminster rule have cross party support throughout Scotland. In train driving terms, Tom is wrong routing Scotland and selling us a single ticket to UKIP nationalism aboard the doomed express.

Niall Campbell, Yoker branch

Paying the price

I read once again with dismay in the July *Journal* that yet another of our colleagues has fallen foul of the mobile phone policy. I have written before in the *Journal* about these so-called 'must have' tools; they are given to us by our companies to benefit the businesses they run, but we are now paying the price by having our members disciplined and dismissed. We do not receive anything extra in our pay or, indeed, seek any remuneration for keeping the companies' customers informed.

I have been on the receiving end of false accusations over the use of a mobile phone and compliance of mobile phone policy. I now think it is time that as ASLEF we stand up and be counted and tell all TOCs and FOCs that company mobile phones will no longer be acceptable to our members, especially now in the age of GSMR, the all-singing, all-dancing piece of equipment to run the 21st century railway.

So come on, Mick, and the executive committee, look after your members and get rid of the problem at source; and don't tell me that education on the use of mobiles is the way forward because it has failed miserably in the past 10 years or so.

Daren Morgan, FLHH

○ **Mick Whelan says:** 'We only use mobile phones when it has been agreed with the company.'

Pots of gold

I notice from the financial summary in the July *Journal* that ASLEF pays out thousands more from the political fund than it collects. When Mick Whelan was kind enough to attend our branch meeting at Bletchley a couple of

months ago, I asked him about this. He said the extra was from a pot where less had been spent in previous years. I was surprised to hear this, recalling that ASLEF was skint a few years back. Could you advise me on the current size of this pot, please? Because if the extra is made up from subscriptions in order to make it appear that all members contribute that goes against my and other opt-out members' wishes (I contribute nothing to any political party as I have contempt for them all) and gives me the right to vote on the political fund. In the last vote, ten years ago, I abstained because I opted out. It's not my money so it's not for me to say how it is spent. If, however, it is partly my money...

Phill Amies, Bletchley

○ **Mick Whelan says:** 'Income for political purposes last year was £130,103 and expenditure was £138,717, a difference of £8,614. In some years the income of our political funds exceeds expenditure and this surplus is available for use in subsequent years. For example, the amount available at the end of the last financial year was £52,605. There is no question of subsidising political expenditure from general funds as this would be in contravention of section 71 of the Trade Union & Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and rule 2 of the political funds of our trade union.'

Ideals and principles



The Mansion House in Doncaster where Donny branch marked 125 years with a civic reception

Many thanks for the kind invite to the ASLEF Doncaster branch anniversary celebrations. It was an honour and a privilege to attend. It was also a great pleasure to be among fellow trade unionists with the same ideals and principles that the NUM was founded on and just illustrates the bond that exists between our two organisations. My personal thanks to Mick Whelan for the emotional presentation he made to the NUM on behalf of ASLEF, a wonderful gesture and extremely appreciated. A great team effort which made for a memorable day!

Chris Skidmore, chairman, Yorkshire area NUM

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COWDEN CRASH

We have some commemorative badges, price £5, to mark the 20th

anniversary of the accident in which two members of Norwood Junction train crew, a Selhurst conductor and a member of the public tragically lost their lives. Contact Mick Green at userg4163@aol.com and please state if you are ex-Norwood train crew.



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The Camels are coming

A new exhibition looks at life and death in the skies above the fields of Flanders. KEITH RICHMOND reflects on what these pictures reveal about those knights of the air

THE first book about Biggles and his chums Algy, Ginger and Bertie, *The Camels are Coming*, was published in 1932. It was quickly followed by *Biggles of the Camel Squadron*, *Biggles Flies East*, *Biggles in France*, *Biggles Pioneer Air Fighter* and, ultimately, nearly 100 others. Because the Nazis were on the march, another war with Germany was looming, and the Boy's Own market was ripe for ripping yarns about traditional British pluck in the skies above the trenches of the Western Front.

The Biggles books were written, as generations of schoolboys know, by William Earl Johns, who traded on the covers as Captain WE Johns but only reached the rank of Flying Officer, or Lieutenant, while serving with 55 Squadron and making strategic bombing raids on enemy targets. He was shot down in a De Havilland DH4 during a raid on Mannheim on 16 September 1918; his observer, 2nd Lieut Alfred Amey, was killed while Johns was captured and held as a prisoner of war.

‘Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth / And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings; / Sunward I’ve climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth / Of sun-split clouds, and done a hundred things / You have not dreamed of’ – *High Flight* by John Gillespie Magee Jr

The title of this exhibition – *Biggles & Chums* – is a little misleading. Because while there are lots of chums, there’s not a lot of Biggles. The sub-title – First World War watercolours and works on paper by Capt WE Johns and his contemporaries – is, strictly, accurate. But of 40 pictures from the RAF Museum’s art collection, many of which have never been exhibited before, hanging on the walls, only one, *No 55 Squadron Under Attack*, watercolour on board, 1920, is by the budding author.

There are no pictures of Biggles, either. But there are portraits of Lieut Thomas Annan, who joined the RFC from the Argyll &



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Aerial combat (clockwise from top right): *The CO* by Cuthbert Orde; the first *Biggles* book; *Mabblethorpe's Last Combat*; 2nd Lieut James Sayer; at the RAF Museum in Colindale



Sutherland Highlanders; 2nd Lieut James Sayer, killed in action in 1917; and Lieut Gilbert Goodman, whose Sopwith Camel was shot down in flames on 28 October 1918 during the Battle of Vittorio Veneto; the next day the Austro-Hungarian Empire sued for an armistice which brought the war in Italy to a close.

There is a beautiful painting of a 539ft Beardmore R27 *Airship in its Shed* by Lieut William Russell Flint of the RNAS; a lovely lithograph of a Felixstowe F2 flying boat by Charles Turner; and amusing caricatures of RFC ground crew, including an *Intoxicated Air Mechanic after Rum Issue*, by the mysterious SJC; and *The CO and Ginger* (not Biggles' flame-haired chum) by Cuthbert Orde.

‘I know that I shall meet my fate / Somewhere among the clouds above; / Those that I fight I do not hate / Those that I guard I do not love’ – *An Irish Airman Foresees His Death* by WB Yeats

Battle pictures, too, including *Huns Surprised Whilst Attacking Bombers on the Struma Front* by Capt Ernest Ford; *Closing In* by Lieut Richard Ashby depicting three Camels attacking a Hannoveraner two seater; *In a Spin* by Geoffrey Watson showing Lieut Francis Mellersh in action against Manfred von Richthofen on the day the Red Baron died; and *Mabblethorpe's Last Combat*.

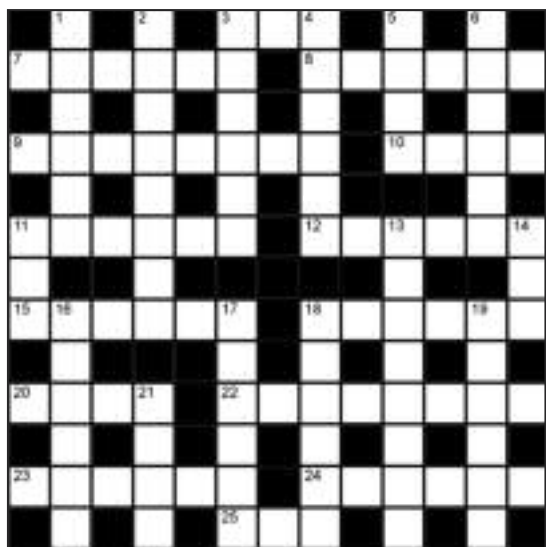
There are other items, too, including many medals and badges; the propeller from the Royal Aircraft Factory BE2c flown by 2nd Lieut Wulstan Tempest from Sutton's Farm near Hornchurch to shoot down the Potters Bar Zeppelin in 1916; fragments of crimson fabric from von Richtofen's Fokker triplane; and a poster exhorting women to join the WRAF: 'Women! Serve your country. There is fit work for every fit woman.'

This exhibition offers a fascinating glimpse into another age when, as the organisers say, the squalor and loss of life on an industrial scale in the trenches prompted people – and the government's propaganda machine – to look to the war in the air and real-life Bigglesworths such as Captain Albert Ball, Major Jimmy McCudden and Major Micky Mannock in search of a little old-fashioned heroism.

‘Initially, when opposing aviators popped off at each other with revolvers and, occasionally, acknowledged each other with a wave, and allowed enemy fliers to return home, this aura of chivalry may be said to have existed. However, technological innovation, which brought about the means efficiently to fight and kill in the air, put a stop to this.’

Biggles & Chums is at the RAF Museum in Colindale, north-west London, until 4 January 2015. Admission is free

Prize Crossword number 100 by Zebedee



Solution to prize crossword number 99 which appeared in the July edition of the ASLEF *Journal*

Across: 7 Russia 8 Relief 9 Knee 10 Youngest 11 Iceberg 13 Ideas 16 Greys 17 Sticker 19 Decrease 21 Much 23 Attack 24 Lonely

Down: 1 Ruin 2 Assembly 3 Lawyers 4 Trout 5 Plug 6 Persuade 12 Corrects 14 Document 15 Utterly 18 Walks 20 Road 22 Colt

Congratulations to **Doug Haller** of **Eldene, Swindon, Wiltshire** who was last month's winner.

Across

- 3 Beast of burden (3)
7 Form a queue (4,2)
8 Piece of crockery (6)
9 Small wheeled vehicle that is pushed (8)
10 Keeps pestering (4)
11 Poverty (6)
12 Computer screen marker (6)
15 International chocolate company (6)
18 Send, transmit (6)
20 Metal associated with the word bullion (4)
22 Develop (a quality) to

- best advantage (8)
23 Giant birdcage (6)
24 Concealing (6)
25 Be in arrears (3)

Down

- 1 Grand concluding act (6)
2 Modify again (8)
3 Place where bees are kept (6)
4 Immobile (6)
5 Cultivated grass (4)
6 Full of bravado (4,2)
11 Small pointed fastener (3)
13 Traitor, apostate (8)

- 14 Beam of light (3)
16 Unfold, develop (6)
17 Beginning of a baby (6)
18 Overused phrase (6)
19 Pertaining to the horse (6)
21 Whisky measure (4)



The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

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Thanks for all your responses to the 99th ASLEF crossword in the July edition. If you successfully complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF *Journal*, 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN by 14 August

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